



THE VOICE

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## A Co., 741ST MI BN SUPPORTS SARAH'S HOUSE GOLF CLASSIC

On October 2, A Co, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN Soldiers enjoyed a day at the Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown, MD. Volunteering their time to support the Sarah's House Golf Classic, 11 Soldiers worked hard to set-up, maintain, and tear-down the charity event. Staff Sgt. Burden, Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of the Soldiers who volunteered, said, "Our main priority here is to take care of details and ensure that the event runs smoothly so that those donating can really enjoy themselves."

On the edge of Fort George G. Meade, Sarah's House provides emergency shelter for as many as 66 people and transitional housing for 22 families. As a supportive housing program for homeless families, Sarah's House is much more than just a safe place to sleep. Their goal is to effect positive change in the families they serve by providing parenting classes and workshops, employment programs, licensed childcare, counseling, and transportation, all aimed at assisting their guests to achieve independence and strengthen their families.

This year was the first time in eight years that Sarah's House decided not to hire a caterer. In order to save money, therefore donating more to the organization, Volunteer Resource Manager Bruce Clopein decided to try a more relaxed lunch in the form of a barbecue. Speaking of the soldiers who volunteered their time Mr. Clopein said, "Without you guys I don't know what I'd have done! I certainly didn't expect the cookout to be this much work. You all took care of the issues before I even knew they arose!"



SPC Pernell Tolson B Co., 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN is given the Oath of Re-enlistment by Capt. Blanca Reyes, B Co., 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN commander in front of the White House on Oct. 30.



Staff Sgt. Baker, C Co., 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN poses with Capt. Nadine King, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN after re-enlisting on Oct. 23, in Iraq.





## *The Army Technical Control and Analysis Element gathers for 20th Annual ATCAE Conference*

Since 1988, the Army Technical Control and Analysis Element, better known as the ATCAE, has been holding an annual conference to discuss current and future aspects of the Military Signals Intelligence Community. The week-long event contributes so greatly to the forward progress of the SIGINT Mission that it is often looked forward to almost as soon as it ends. On Monday, September 22, 2008, the ATCAE kicked-off its 20<sup>th</sup> installment of M.I. innovation. This year's theme was "Develop, Maintain and Enhance the Future SIGINT Force." With a record-breaking 411 registered guests and more attendance from Coalition Forces than ever before, this year's conference can only be viewed as a great success.

"Emerging Tools and Technologies,"

The success of the ATCAE Conference often equates to the success of the current SIGINT Mission. This is the week that gives many units the opportunity to coordinate tactical SIGINT operations and synchronize their mission with the current and future needs of the Army. No event can be successful without the appropriate personnel ensuring its operation. Chief Warrent Officer 4 Wendy Wayman, Cpt. Louis Stangland and Master Sgt. Jesse Pisciotta and many other Soldiers from Alpha Company, 742<sup>nd</sup>

"Develop, Maintain and Enhance the Future SIGINT Force."

MI BN were responsible for the organization and execution of this year's Conference.

The daily topics included "Emerging Tools and Technologies," "Building and Sustaining International Cooperation in the Tactical SIGINT Community," "Tactical SIGINT Support," "Cryptologic Training" and "SIGINT Warfighter Support – The Road to Deployment" (an entire day devoted to the overall betterment of current and future down range missions).

The ATCAE Conference is always considered a success, but with some of the notable guest speakers in attendance, this year's conference well exceeded the standard. Key note addresses were presented by Maj. Gen. David B. Lacquement, Commanding General – INSCOM; Maj. Gen. John DeFreitas III, Deputy Director – NSA Analysis and Production; Col Robert Mazzolin, Director – Land Command System Program Management; Mr. Keith Masback, President – U.S. Geospatial Intelligence Foundation; Mr. Maxie McFarland, G2 – U.S. Army TRADOC; Sgt. Maj. Thomas Coulter, G2 Sergeant Major – Forces Command and Col. Robert J. Taylor, Commander – 704<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Brigade.

In addition to the keynote speakers, conference attendees were also afforded the opportunity to work, hands-on, with the equipment and programs currently available for the modern SIGINT mission. This opportunity can most likely take credit for the increase in Coalition Force attendance. This year hosted seats for Coalition Forces from Australia, Canada, Great Britain and New Zealand.

## **B COMPANY AWARDED THE GOLDEN NUGGET**



**T**he Meade Operations Center's Counter-Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Cell the Gold Nugget Award for significant contributions during 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The award was presented in a special ceremony at the NSA on 30 September 2008. The analytic strategies developed to answer a crucial operational need not only saved U.S. and Allied lives, but added to the Intelligence Community's body of knowledge in this area. The Cell's coordination of the analytic effort and sharing of this knowledge throughout the community further magnified the effects of its work.

The Meade Operations Center's Counter-IED Cell (CIC) made significant contributions to the field of Geospatial Metadata / Traffic Analysis. In 2006 the Intelligence Community became aware of usage of a particularly challenging technology used by enemies of our Coalition Forces in Iraq. The CIC learned about the technology by reading tutorials and help files, and by networking with others throughout the DoD community. From there, they developed analytic tactics, techniques and procedures to exploit the technology.

While several organizations shared responsibility for conducting the analysis, the CIC took the lead in organizing the effort and propagating the knowledge throughout the Intelligence Community. It provided Quality Control of the intelligence, made continual process improvements, and collaborated untiringly with organizations internal and external to the NSA to keep up with the latest innovations. To aid the division of effort and further involve others throughout the enterprise, the team hosted a weekly Community of Interest meeting and regularly attended other analyst-to-analyst exchanges and VTCs on the subject.

The CIC also provided critical training to analysts both within NSA and in the Intelligence Community. This training and the automation of several key analytic methods also served to elevate the abilities of junior analysts. The trainers regularly maintain close contact with former students to ensure the latter are aware of the newest developments and techniques. The team created and updates guidelines for analytic methods and tools so that the processes are standardized and developed templates for efficient dissemination of information. The team worked with a contractor to develop a training manual, and created a number of training documents. They also helped design tools for the process by describing to the developers what was needed or by finding an existing tool and having it modified to suit the purpose. In addition to their informal training initiatives, the team worked with a representative from ADET to create a formal course on the technology and analytic techniques for the NCS.

The CIC worked with others to create a WIKI, on-line forum, glossary, and other tools to promote continual learning and propagation of new information among the collaborating analysts. They gathered information/data from other sources to provide a single "go to" place for counter-IED information. Team members have given numerous briefings at all levels, from enlisted deploying service members, to the director of the NSA (DIRNSA) and external VIPs, on related analysis and capabilities to increase community awareness, and have worked with the MOC Communications Director to publish two *SIDtoday* articles for the education of the greater NSA workforce.

While several organizations throughout the enterprise have been involved in exploiting this technology, the MOC's Counter-IED Cell was the first to establish a formal set of processes recognized and used throughout the community; the first to create and begin teaching analysis techniques; the first to provide formalized training to analysts in other organizations; and the first and only organization to continually search, validate, and incorporate newly-discovered information into the workflow.

# "METLYMPICS"

## C Co., 741<sup>st</sup> tackles Warrior Training Tasks

Story by: PFC Zechorah Pointdexter

Photos by: PFC Spangenberg



SPC Miller, SGT Burgher, SSG Fuentes, and SGT Hazelton rush for time to move a litter carrying an injured SSG Britt.



PFC Modaber and SGT Hazelton brave the Individual Movement Lane

**M**ETLympics is a Charlie Company competition within the 741<sup>st</sup> MI Battalion that tests Soldier's knowledge and ability to conduct Army Warrior Training Tasks in a squad size exercise scenario. The event consisted of four Squad Training Exercise (STX) lanes. Each STX lane graded and scored by NCOs within the company. CPT Clarke and 1SG McCliment presented awards for the team with the highest score at the conclusion of training. One of the Platoon Sergeant's, SSG Runolfson said, "The team concept was great because it was good for developing esprit de corps within Charlie Company".

The first lane was Individual Movements Techniques (IMT), which consisted of the high-crawl, low-crawl, and 3-5 second rush. A course was setup with bells tied to an 18-inch high network of strings and stakes for the low-crawl. If a Soldier hit a bell while low-crawling, then they were peppered with water balloons when directed by the Lane NCOIC, SSG Cardwell.

"It's really nice to get out of the building and do some real Army training," PFC Hayden said. The second lane tested Soldiers' training on the buddy and litter carries. SGT Bornibus and PFC Butler demonstrated proper carries and techniques. Soldiers were tested for carries with and without litters for technique and speed.

*"It's really nice to get out of the building  
and do some real Army training"*

The third lane tested Soldier's knowledge and skills for reacting to a chemical attack by donning Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit chemical protective suit and protective masks.

Soldiers were tested to ensure they could get the mask and suit on in the allotted time and quizzed on proper wear of the suit and levels of protection. The fourth lane consisted of map reading. SGT Spence created a quiz testing Soldier's abilities to find points on a map utilizing an eight digit grid coordinate, proper map reading skills, intersection / resections and calculating distances.

The Company was divided into four teams; each team competed in all four lanes sequentially. At the conclusion of the METLympics, the scores were tallied up and a tie emerged between Team X and Team Y. The tie-breaking event was a seven-on-seven combatives exercise. SPC Herrera broke the stalemate when his opponent conceded defeat. He then moved on to assist the rest of his team - nearly single-handedly propelling his team to victory. SGT McEnerney said "I had a great time! This is the kind of training that made me join the Army, HOOAH!"





SGT Bryant receives her GAFPB from BG Schachthofer

# Brigade Soldiers earn the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge

Story by: Capt. David Parker

**S**oldiers from Headquarters Company, 741<sup>st</sup> and 742<sup>nd</sup> MI BNs completed the final event for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) on October 1. The road march wrapped up a series of rigorous training that spanned the last two weeks of September.

The badge is awarded by the German Armed Forces, which requires participants to complete seven events that test their mental and physical abilities. SFC Janey, Headquarters Company Platoon Sergeant, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN planned, organized and evaluated the training events, which took place at the Ft. Meade High School track and the Gaffney Gym pool.

The events consisted of the 200 meter swim, broad jump, 100 meter sprint, shot put, 3000 meter run, 9mm marksmanship and a road march (distance ranged between 15 and 30 kilometers depending upon age and gender). Soldiers are required to complete all events to earn the coveted award, which comes in Gold, Silver and Bronze depending upon how each Soldier tests in all events. Soldiers can earn the badge multiple times – the fifth award has a ‘V’ inscribed on it. The badge can be worn on the uniform and is worth five promotion points.

704<sup>th</sup> MI Brigade Soldiers made the journey south to Reston, Virginia early Wednesday morning, joining Soldiers throughout the Military District of Washington, along with German Soldiers from the German Armed Forces Command for a morning of sweat, blisters and “fun”. Weather was ideal for a road march, partly cloudy with temperature in the mid-50s.

The road march is designed to test a Soldier’s aerobic endurance, anaerobic fitness, and mental toughness with distances ranging from 15 to 30 kilometers. Soldiers pushed out at 0730, and for the next five hours they gutted it out, walking, often jogging the 10 kilometer course in pursuit of the Gold GAFPB.

At the conclusion of the road march, after everyone crossed the finish line and blisters were attended to by the medics; Soldiers were bused over to the German Armed Forces Command center and presented their GAFPB by Brigadier General Gero L.K. Schachthofer and Sergeant Major Michael Moeller. The day was capped off with traditional German food, drink and music.



German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge

right:

704th Soldiers finish the 30km road march ‘Army Strong’



Photos by: Sgt. Thomas Springsteen

# TEAMWORK

## B Co. Soldiers tackle LRC at Fort Indiantown Gap

Story and Photos by: Capt. Blanca Reyes



PFC Betancourt (Lt) and SGT Young (Rt) show their strength as they lift the equipment up over the beam as SSG Pauling (Top Lt) and SPC Tolson (Top Rt) stabilize and secure it on the beam.



SSG Moore oversees SGT Jimenez as she provides assistance to SPC Gardner as she climbs into the tube with SSG Zabler as the main supporting element.

Bravo Company, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN Soldiers took on the Leadership Reaction Course at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., On 2 October 2008. As a part of Sergeants Time Training 16 Soldiers negotiated their way through five challenging obstacles.

Despite the two hour drive to the training facility, Bravo Company Soldiers appreciated getting a little dirty, working as a team to overcome obstacles and the opportunity to train in an environment away from their workspaces at Ft. Meade for a day.

Ft. Indiantown Gap is a National Guard Training Center located in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania that offers more than 17,000 acres and 140 training areas and facilities for year-round training for military forces, law enforcement agents and civilians from across the nation.

With state-of-the-art training facilities, they are always looking for ways to better serve citizen-Soldiers, as evidenced by the ongoing renovations of existing facilities as well as construction of new facilities.

In the span of a two hour training session, two teams composed of six Soldiers each were able to execute five demanding obstacles. Each obstacle tested their ability to analyze a situation, work within the framework and tools provided, challenging their leadership skills and requiring them to work together to perform their assigned tasks.

The LRC also built confidence in each individual Soldier as well as camaraderie for the company by getting the command and Soldier's involved!



SGT Young, PFC Betancourt, SGT Vincent and SGT Andrew (Lt-Rt) execute a bucket brigade maneuver to get lumber and across a reconstructed bridge.



# 743RD *Field Training Exercise 2008*

Story and Photo by: Capt. John Craighead



The 743rd MI BN conducted their Annual Field Training Exercise (FTX) on Buckley AFB, for the first time in the unit's history. This exercise provided the soldiers with focused training, on Troop Leading Procedures (TLPs), Army Warrior Task (AWT), and Battle Drills over two consecutive weekends.

On Saturday the companies were instructed on Army Warrior Task and Battle Drills. After a safety brief, lane orientation, and situation brief, each platoon performed a mounted and dismounted patrol. The platoons practiced those tasks and conducted hip pocket training.

On Sunday, the Platoons received an update brief from the Bn S2, Intelligence NCO and began preparation to face an opposition force. Platoons executed their patrols against an Opposing Force (OPFOR) performed by base Air Force personnel.

The open plains provided few opportunities for cover and concealment and allowed the OPFOR excellent fields of fire. There were numerous levels of experience on display during the weekend field exercise, some of which reflected the numerous Iraq and Afghanistan rotation experience

resident in the Battalion. Others were able to learn about the difficulty and planning required to execute a combat mission.

The ability to conduct Army Warrior training on Buckley Air Force Base was an excellent change of pace. The BAFB was an ideal location for the 743D to rehearse, execute, and evaluate common Army tasks like: convoy training, radio procedures, and TLPs. The training location helped the 743D MI BN achieve certification and evaluation for over 200 soldiers. The training success and the unit's ability to utilize BAFB facilities will ensure that future training events are not restricted to the local Army base.

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## 743rd MI Battalion enjoys Organizational Day

The weather was overcast and wet but morale was high in August for the 743rd MI Battalion's annual Organization day. The Battalion adjusted rapidly and moved the entire event inside the Buckley AFB Gymnasium. The entire Battalion and 80 spouses and children showed up for family games, sports, and pizza. All the Companies were competing for the vaulted Commander's Cup, which Bravo Co., "Black Hawks" has won the last two years.

The Organization day encompassed 7 sporting events that pitted company against company competition. Trying to conduct the entire day inside introduced some unique challenges to the event planning, but the staff took it all in stride and pulled off an outstanding event for all participants. Alpha

Company jumped to an early lead in points, but Bravo Company stayed close waiting for the volleyball and tug-of-war competitions to make up the difference. While the companies were competing, the families had games, remote controlled cars, relays, and prizes for the children to enjoy.

By the end of the day it was clear that a new champion would hold the Commander's Cup for the next year. Alpha Company's volleyball results were enough to secure them the Commander's Cup and the, "Bird's of Prey" streamer. The temperature never rose above 56 degrees outside, and it rained all day, but the 743D enjoyed a wonderful and safe day of Esprit De Corps and family time.

By: Capt. John Craighead

# Dive In

By: Sgt. Evan Kwisnek

On October 16, Soldiers from B Co, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN along with Soldiers from HHC 704<sup>th</sup> MI Bde conduct Drown Proofing for Sergeant's Time Training (STT) at the Gafney Fitness Center Swimming Pool. Soldiers were challenged by Instructors SGT Kwisnek (B Co) and SGT Rodriguez (HHC) with various water survival techniques during this rigorous training session.

The motivated Soldiers were certainly given the chance to "get their feet wet" when they were instructed to get into the pool using proper entry techniques. Throughout each exhausting series of exercises, the Soldiers remained motivated and confident, showing no fear as they treaded water, swam underwater, and used personal clothing as flotation devices. Such techniques as the "Hanging Float" were especially challenging for some Soldiers.

Spartan and Big Dog Soldier's proved their strength and endurance when it came time for evaluation that measured every Soldier's physical and mental toughness using the techniques they learned which called upon to keep their heads, quite literally, above water! After 4.5 minutes of treading water, 2.5 minutes of hanging float, an underwater swim, and personal flotation testing, Soldiers were given an opportunity to test their swimming prowess with an end-to-end race.



Soldiers use proper deep-water entry techniques.



1SG David Ayers Bravo Co., first sergeant demonstrates his ability to use his uniform as a flotation device.

Paintball ops







# MOTOR STABLES

Story and Photos by: Sgt. Akeem Richmond

**O**n November 20, Soldiers from Bravo Company, 741st MI Battalion conducted Sergeants Time Training at the 204th MP Reserve Motor Pool. Eight Soldiers negotiated their way around the Army Reserve Units brand new M1165A1 Armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheel Vehicle's (HMMWV's). Bravo Company Soldiers appreciated getting a chance to train in an area not readily available to the 704th Military Intelligence Brigade.

The U.S. Army Reserve Center is home to several tenant units, many of which have relocated to the center over the past year from within a 50 mile radius. The \$38-million complex provides the units with ample room for training, education classes and administrative operations. The center was built to facilitate and centralize Reserve training in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area, which entitles the new center to run operations by a full-time staff of approximately 150 Civilian and Military personnel.

In the span of a one hour training session, the Soldiers learned how to perform a Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) and identify the Basic Initial Issue (BII) of a M1165A1. They also learned about additional equipment that can be used with the M1165A1 and hear some actual experiences that others have been through with the vehicles.



SSG Moore (Top) and PFC Rubel (Bottom) inspect the engine of a M1165A1.



SPC Fessy shows PFC Rubel the location of the HMMWV batteries





SSG Fitzpatrick and SPC Lutz conduct a night STG mission in support of 3/3 ID near the village of Salman Pak.



Members of Mad Dawg complete M4 weapons qualification in preparation for deployment to Iraq.

**MAD**



Members of Mad Dawg prepare their equipment during pre-deployment training at Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA





Mad Dawg operators are recognized for their achievements and contributions to the counter insurgency fight in Iraq.



Two Mad Dawg teams after conducting certification training at the Camp Slayer STG training site.

**DAWG**

Members of Mad Dawg calibrate and zero their holographic sights prior to their deployment to Iraq.







## 743RD NCOS WIN BACK TO BACK TURKEY BOWLS

By: Spc. Stamper

**N**ovember 25, the NCOs of the 743rd MI BN were victorious over the officers, with a near shut-out score of 43-6, in the BN's annual Thanksgiving Turkey Bowl. SGT Sourivong, of Headquarters Operations Company, was the high scorer for the NCO's, and the game, with 3 touchdowns including a 62-yard bomb from the NCO's quarter back, SSG Soileau of Alpha Company. SGT Sourivong also threw SGT Lopez, of H.O.C., a touchdown pass off of a reverse that the officers could not believe. Shortly after, SSG Soileau ran the ball in for a 1- point conversion.

Some other players that scored during the game include: SSG Crabtree of Bravo Company and SGT Baker of Alpha Company. Both of these NCO's earned their team 2-point conversions. The only officer to score during the whole game was a soldier that was once an NCO, CW3 Pee of Alpha Company. He made the touchdown for his team after Headquarters and Operations Company's 1SG, 1SG Munchbach, narrowly missed an interception, tipping the pig-skin into the end zone and CW3 Pee's hands. The officers failed to get the conversion that followed.

This is the second year in a row that NCO's have managed to take the victory. The players, as well as the NCO Support Channel, are anxious to watch the NCO's continue their winning streak next year.

Maj. Duane Henderson, 743rd MI BN, executive officer moves the ball up the field for the officers.



Roughly 400 Soldiers and family members of the 741st MI BN helped themselves to an early Thanksgiving meal at McGill Training Center during the 741st MI BN Thanksgiving Potluck on Nov. 18.



# C CO. 741<sup>ST</sup> MI BN SPENDS A DAY AT PLAY

Story and photo by: Sgt. J. TaShun Joycé, 704<sup>th</sup> MI BDE PAO



Sgt. Mary Vines, Company C, 741<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence BN sanitizes a large building block prior to Romp N Stomp, a parent-child play group held Tuesdays beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Child and Youth Services center.

Soldiers from Company C, 741<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, 704<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Brigade began their work-day on a playful note by participating in Romp ‘N’ Stomp, a parent-child play group at the Fort Meade Child and Youth Services building on November 18.

Held on Tuesday mornings throughout the school year from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Romp N Stomp provides age appropriate toys for children infant through age five.

The Soldiers primarily volunteered to assist in the set up and tear down of the morning’s activities which included cleaning the gymnasium, removing hundreds toys from storage sheds behind the building, sanitizing the toys for the children to play with and putting everything away after the play group had ended.

A couple of the volunteers who are parents decided to use their time away from the office enjoying the company of their children.

“When I heard about this activity for the kids I got excited,” Cpl. Gene Winkle, Company C 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN, father of three, said. “I love playing and spending time with my kids. I plan on bringing them here.”

Winkle believes it’s important that children learn social skills at an early age. They need to learn how to interact, share and treat each other with respect.

“I think it’s important for children to interact with each other and participate in activities they may not participate in at home or daycare,” Sgt. Mary Vines, Company C, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN. “It also gives the children a chance to interact with their parents.”

Approaching its eighth year of operation the program aims to provide an environment for parents and their children to meet and make friends with other parents and children, Lisa Redmond, Army Community Services, Parent Support Program Manager, said.

“It increases socialization especially for stay at home moms,” Redmond said. “It’s been very successful; we average about 200 parents and children weekly.”

Despite the stampedes of excited young children running and crawling back and forth through the youth services gymnasium with their parents in close pursuit Romp N Stomp serves a much larger purpose than just fun and games.

“We have parent education workshops once a month to help enrich the relationships between parents and their children,” Redmond said.

“Romp ‘N’ Stomp allows us to communicate and inform parents about other programs sponsored by ACS,” Cindy Hurd, ACS, new parent support visitation said. Hurd assists Redmond in supervising Romp ‘N’ Stomp while spreading the word about the numerous free resources ACS provides to parents and their children.

In addition to Romp ‘N’ Stomp ACS sponsors a single parent support group on the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Parenting With a Purpose on Wednesday mornings 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. beginning January 7, Parenting in the midst of deployment support group Mondays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. all at the Meuse Forest Neighborhood Center and BABEASE Boot Camp at the Army Community Services building the third Friday of each month.

“Parents are encouraged to bring their children,” Redmond said. For parents who cannot participate in these programs during the regularly scheduled time individual visits can be scheduled by contacting the ACS office, Redmond said.

# VETERAN'S DAY IS A GOOD TIME FOR P.I.E



Nov. 7, 2008 - Spc. Spencer Wilson, salutes the nation's colors held by Staff Sgt. Michelle King during a flag raising ceremony to commemorate Veteran Day at Van Bokkelen Elementary School in Severn, Md.

Students and faculty members of Van Bokkelen Elementary School began Veteran's Day festivities a few days early by recognizing 24 Soldiers from the 741<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion as part of the school's Veterans' Day commemoration on November 7.

The morning's events started shortly after 8:00 a.m. with students and faculty quietly exiting the school's front entrance in single file lines to see the U.S. flag and the Maryland state flag be raised by the 704<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Brigade Select Honor Guard.

After the National Anthem was performed students recited the Pledge of Alligance followed by Van Bokkelen's personal pledge to be respectful, safe, willing to learn, and to conduct themselves in a manner that is expected of good students. A brief ceremony was con-

ducted in the school gymnasium where students and staff formally thanked the Soldiers in attendance for their service and dedication.

Van Bokkelen is located just minutes from Fort Meade's Reece road entrance, educating young scholars from grades pre-kindergarten through five. The relationship the 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN maintains with the school was fostered through the Anne Arundel County Partners in Education program.

"I appreciate the fact that we have the opportunity to work with local developers of young minds," Maj. John Athey, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN, executive officer said. "The teachers and faculty seem to have a heartfelt appreciation for us."

In its third year of partnership with Van Bokkelen the

"I appreciate the fact that we have the opportunity to work with local developers of young minds,"





Pfc. Elizabeth Wilson, HOC, 741st MI BN and Staff Sgt. Adam Colliton, C Co., 741st MI BN read a patriotic story to Mrs. Cooper's first grade class at Van Bokkelen Elementary School on Nov. 7.

741<sup>st</sup> MI BN frequently visits throughout the school year for special events and provides volunteers for its ongoing Adopt a Soldier and Homework Helpers program.

A major component in the association between the 741<sup>st</sup> and the school involves assisting in promoting literacy among the students by reading age appropriate text to individual classes. To honor Veterans' Day Soldiers shared patriotic literature in addition to answering a number of questions about military service and the ongoing Global War on Terrorism.

"This is great way to interact with the community and show the students what we do," PIE volunteer Staff Sgt. Beverly Realmontes, 741<sup>st</sup> MI BN, C Co, said. "We feed off the students' energy."

"We never stop learning and we must communicate that value to our children,"

Realmontes works closely with reading intervention teacher Ms.

Barbara May, a transplant of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. With over 40 years experience as a reading teacher May focuses her efforts on moving students to advanced reading levels. She also provides assistance to students who aren't successful in regular classrooms by reinforcing the reading program of the child's teacher.

May believes that a family that values literacy will instill that same value within their child by reading with the child, to the child, encouraging the child to read more, discussing what has been read, and by setting the example. May stressed the need for parents to assist in broadening their child's vocabulary by challenging them to use more than common words.

"We never stop learning and we must communicate that value to our children," she said. "We will never know enough and we must continue trying to understand."

There are several organizations on Fort Meade that are currently participating in the PIE program, but for those that aren't it's a simple process to get involved.

Interested Soldiers must fill out a volunteer registration packet that includes a background check per Army regulation, watch an Anne Arundel County Public Schools video about volunteering, and contact a PIE coordinator to get introduced to a class, Realmontes said.

"We plan to continue to foster a useful partnership and ensure that our volunteering falls in line with the school's citizenship and character development goals," Athey said.



# IRON WOMAN

HHC COMMANDER PLACES  
FIRST IN THE ARMED FORCES  
COMPETITION OF THE IRON

By: Capt. Samantha Bird

The Ironman Triathlon consists of 2.4 miles swimming, 112 miles biking, and 26.2 miles running. Getting to start of the race healthy is often harder than the race itself. Unfortunately my friend Tina, the woman selected to be on the Army's Ironman Team, was diagnosed with a stress fracture less than two weeks before the start of the race. I was the alternate for the Army's Ironman Team so I received an email asking if I could do the race for the Army! Then I was on my way to the 2008 Hawaiian Ironman!

The swim started into the beautiful, normally tranquil setting of Kailua Bay. The start of the race is always full of nervous energy and excitement. I was pretty calm since I really couldn't have too many expectations since I'd only found out I was doing the race 11 days before! I had goals, sure, but knew I couldn't be disappointed if I didn't meet them. My one firm goal was to finish. I wanted to go sub 13 as well and hoped to go sub 11:30, and had a super dream goal of sub 11. To go sub 11 I knew I had to swim under an hour, bike under 6:00, and run under 4:00.

The pros started at 6:45 and that was my cue to get into the water. We had 15 minutes to wait until the amateur start and had to tread water waiting for the canon. The swim start was very crowded. 1800 athletes had to line up within 75m for the start of the race. I couldn't even find a space to tread water without getting kicked by someone else trying to tread water. Once the canon went off true madness ensued... couldn't even say that I was really swimming for the first 400m or so since it was just full of contact. It was very crowded pretty much until the turnaround (swam around a catamaran) but after that I managed to get into a good pack and the swim on the way back was pretty smooth. I exited the water at 1:01 which was a bit slower than I wanted but it's a long day so I wasn't too worried about a minute. I rinsed off under the makeshift showers that were set up, took my time getting ready in transition, and then headed off on the bike.

I was tired at first so I was worried that my half last weekend had taken a lot out of me. The first



part of the course is through town and there are a couple of hills but the energy of the crowd is great and I reminded myself, I'm doing the ironman!! The dead feeling in my legs passed and I felt pretty good once I was heading towards Hawi on the Queen K. I was going over 20mph without too much effort so I knew we had a pretty good tailwind. The volunteers at the aid stations, like the volunteers throughout all of the race, were awesome! There were aid stations every 5 miles and I made sure that I was getting 1-2 small waterbottles to fill my aerobottle and also kept drinking my concentrated nutrition mixture but knew I couldn't drink too much at once since it had to last 3 hours.

The bike out was pretty crowded and I was passed by a lot of people but knew it was a long ride and I had to ride within myself. There were a ton of people (maybe 10?) in the first drafting tent and the draft marshals were out in full force. It was beautiful on the way out—I was looking at the ocean to the left, the mountains to the right, and all of the lava surrounding me. When we made the turn for the climb to Hawi the winds started. The climb into Hawi is about 15 miles and is a bit rolling and then just a long gradual uphill. The winds made it "fun" though. There was a steady headwind the entire climb. Then there were these crosswinds that threatened to blow you off your bike. Strong gusts that required you to lean hard into the wind and grab onto your handlebars to stay on your bike. I was so happy to get

to the turnaround and knew I'd have a tailwind and be riding downhill for quite some time! My special needs bag, full of my nutrition for the 2nd half of the bike, wasn't ready so I stopped and got off my bike to get it.

The downhill and fast section didn't last as long as I hoped it would... soon I felt like I was fighting the wind again. I felt ok until about mile 75. Then my body just seemed to shut down. I was very hot (the sun had been out blazing strong the whole time), I was wondering why I was doing this, I swore I'd never do another Ironman again, I thought I'd have to walk the whole marathon to finish, did I mention I was hot?? Up until this point I'd only been drinking water and my nutrition drink (about 250 calories an hour from a concentrated drink mix in a water bottle). I was told that Gatorade wouldn't do anything for me since I was already taking electrolyte tablets. I decided to start taking in Gatorade though since I don't know if I was absorbing water very well. I was very salty on my face and I had a lot of water just sitting in my stomach. For about 15 miles I really was going about 12-13 mph since there was a strong headwind and I just felt exhausted. I felt better about mile 90 or so and started to gear towards my goal of going under 6 hours again. My average at this point was 18.7 mph and to go under 6 hours I knew I had to average 18.6 mph. I was so happy to make the turn off the Queen K and head into transition!! I managed to get in at 5:58!

My transition was slow... mainly because I was so happy to get there! And I knew I needed to take my time and make sure my feet were ready for the marathon. I also hit the portajohn for the first time since starting the race. I actually felt pretty good at the start of the marathon and was going at a decent pace. I walked the aid station at mile 4 and a bit further (I would choose a point to start running, then get there and choose another one, then another one, then finally start running!). I walked a bit at mile 8 again and then again going up Palani Hill. It was pretty hot out so I was taking water and dumping it on my head at each aid station and also getting sponges and getting cups of ice to try to keep cool. The crowds along Alii were great and made the race fun (except for when I would get so tired that I need to take a little walk break). The walk breaks were great though since I think it really helped me be able to run at a good pace when I was running. Once on the Queen K I started to feel



• better and some clouds rolled in and really helped make  
• it easier to run.

• I took in some chicken broth which tasted wonderful  
• at mile 13 or so and then make sure I got some at each  
• aid station where there was chicken broth. Throughout  
• the run I didn't want any gels so I would eat an orange  
• slice at most aid stations. After a quick walk break and  
• portajohn at mile 15 it was down into the energy lab.  
• The energy lab is where the "race really begins" for the  
• professional athletes. But for someone like me it was  
• where my race is almost over!! After leaving the energy  
• lab at mile 19 the race is "almost" over.

• I talked to quite a few people on the run and that  
• helped pass the time. While running into the energy lab  
• I started running with an athlete, Luis Alvarez, who was  
• completing his 56TH Ironman!! We passed a Navy Seal  
• who had a crew filming him and then he started running  
• with Luis and me. Back on the Queen K I took 2 more  
• quick walk breaks and then after running down Palani  
• (mile 25!) I received lots of energy from the crowd and  
• felt like I was flying through that last mile! Running  
• down Alii was amazing and I had a huge smile on my  
• face running through the finish line as the announcer  
• called out, YOU ARE AN IRONMAN!! My total time  
• was 11:17.37, which was about 22 minutes faster than  
• my previous Ironman!

• The Army Team finished 1st in the Military Competi-  
• tion (by 4 minutes over the Coast Guard) and I was the  
• first Military Female in the Armed Forces Competition  
• as well.



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# L ABOARD!

Story and Photos by:  
Sgt. Valerie Hamilton

**A** Company, 741st MI BN Soldiers seized an opportunity to go aboard the USNS Comfort while she was docked in the Baltimore Harbor on Friday, 03. The Service Members assigned to the USNS Comfort routinely disembark on humanitarian missions throughout the world. The latest mission to South America was a major component of the president's "Advancing the Cause of Social Justice in the Western Hemisphere" initiative.

Comfort visited 12 Central American, South American and Caribbean nations where its medical crew provided free health care services to communities in need. The mission offered valuable training to U.S. military personnel while promoting U.S. goodwill in the region. In all, the civilian and military medical team treated more than 98,000 patients, provided 380,000 treatments and performed 1,170 surgeries.

The Soldiers were grateful for the opportunity to tour the ship that has saved the lives of all members of the Armed Forces. The Comfort is a converted San Clemente class tanker built in 1976 and was originally given the name of Rose City. She was converted to a hospital ship and delivered to the Navy on December 1, 1987 and assigned to the Military Sealift Command to operate.

The USNS Comfort along with her sister vessel the USNS Mercy provide emergency, on-site care for U.S. combatant forces deployed to war zones. The USNS Comfort deployed to both the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The hospital ships' secondary mission is to provide full hospital services to support U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide.





Sgt. Osorio takes a break on one of the ships bunks.

The USNS Comfort contains 12 fully-equipped operating rooms, a 1,000 bed hospital facility, digital radiological services, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, an optometry lab, a CAT-scan and two oxygen producing plants. The ship is equipped with a helicopter deck capable of landing large military helicopters. The Comfort is kept in a reduced operating status in Baltimore, Md. by a small crew of civil service mariners and active duty Navy medical and support personnel. The Comfort can be fully activated and crewed within five days.



CPT Libby, A Co Commander, presents a Certificate of Appreciation and a BN coin to Master Chief Petty Officer Aubright, for taking Soldiers on a tour of the USNS Comfort.



First Sgt. Hudson, 741st MI BN, A Company renders the appropriate honors to the Ensign before disembarking the Ship.